



THINK ON THESE THINGS.....

Reading: 1 Corinthians 4:14-20

14 I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. 15 Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge you to imitate me. 17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

18 Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. 19 But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. 20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Reflection:

The young Corinthian church were a passionate and difficult bunch of people. There were arguments about who should lead and who shouldn't, and as a result, the church was splitting into factions, each following a different leader. To push their advantage some of the leaders were claiming that Paul did not care for the Corinthian believers and that he would not return to visit them and follow up on his work.

However, Paul cared passionately for this community, which meant that he was not afraid to challenge and discipline them when necessary, in order to guide them in God's ways. That's why he sent his faithful friend, Timothy, and promised to return as soon as he was able. But, he was hoping that his letter, and Timothy's ministry, would be enough to resolve the issues so that when he did visit, he would be able to celebrate with this community, and not confront them.

Much of Paul's ministry was founded on a simple, but profound belief - that God's Reign is not about what we say, but about how we live. In other words, practice what you preach! It is only in the power of God's Spirit that we can become the humble, loving, justice-seeking people God has called us to be.

And it is these marks of the Spirit's work that Paul wanted to see in the lives of the leaders of the Corinthians. It is also these marks in our lives that will show that we are followers of Jesus, and that will contribute to making God's Reign a reality in our world.

Once we have recognised that following Jesus is not just about saying the right words, we quickly realise that we need God's power to walk in and live the Jesus way.

Breath-Prayer for Today: Empower me, Lord God, so that my faith is expressed not just in words, but in actions.